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ABSTRACT

Research on the training needs of part-time community education workers in 1988 in Scotland focused on adult educators. Thirty-two 45-minute tape-recorded interviews were conducted in three areas: an inner-city area, a rural area, and a mixed area of large towns with a rural hinterland. The interviewee group included 21 part-time adult educators and 11 immediate employers or trainers. Four broad categories of training needs for part-time adult education workers were identified: (1) an introduction to the setting in which one is operating; (2) the development of key basic skills necessary to perform the job of part-time adult educator; (3) refresher courses for experienced workers; and (4) specialist courses such as counseling, assertiveness, and computers. Existing training was perceived as successful by the part-time workers when it included opportunities to meet other part-time staff, was content-relevant to the work situation, included practical activities, was not too time consuming, and was delivered by those with recent experience in adult education. Although few of the interviewees had experienced modular training, there was considerable support for a modular approach from part-time staff; however, full-time staff voiced many doubts about it. (CML)

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Part-Time Adult Educators and Training :

A Study of Needs and Provision

Pamela Munn

Celine Castelino
Daphne Hamilton

Part-time staff make up the bulk of staff in the community education service, yet little is known about their training needs and the adequacy of current training provision. This report is one of a series focussing on youth work, adult education and community development. Staff working in the voluntary and local government sectors were interviewed about training needs and provision and a nationwide survey of provision was undertaken. We also report views on modular training. Each report begins with a summary of main findings and some key questions for those involved in training.

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Preface

This is one of three reports arising from research on the training needs of part-time community education workers. The focus of this report is on adult workers. Companion reports on youth workers and workers in community development are also available. The research was commissioned by the Scottish Education Department (SED) and had three main strands. The first strand involved researching the views of part-time staff, their employers and their trainers about training needs and about how adequately these needs were being met (the work reported here). Inevitably there have been changes in training provision since our information was collected and the picture presented here is a snapshot of perceptions of training in 1988. The second strand concerned the development of a small number of training modules, based on identified needs. The third strand consisted of an evaluation of these modules in operation.

The work reported here would not have been possible without the help and support of a great many people. We are grateful to all those who spared time to be interviewed and to those who so thoroughly collected information for us about their training provision. The report has had the benefit of the constructive criticism of the research project's advisory committee and of Lyn Tett and Fiona O'Kane at the Scottish Community Education Council with whom we are collaborating in the research. We are grateful for their support and encouragement. Mavis Gutu typed successive drafts quickly and efficiently. Despite all these contributions to the work we should make it clear that sins of omission or of commission rest with the authors. The views reported here are not necessarily those of either the SED or of the Scottish Council for Research in Education.

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Celine Castelino
Daphne Hamilton

August 1989

Summary of main findings

A brief summary is provided as a handy reference tool and as a guide to the main body of the report. Details of the research design method are contained in Chapter 1. It is important to refer to this chapter to understand the claims about the generalisability of the findings.

Basic Training	There is a consensus across the voluntary and local authority sectors about the need for and content of basic training.	Chapter 2
Quality of Basic Training	Training targeted specifically at adult learning styles was valued. Generic courses were criticised. There were some worries about standards and delivery.	Chapter 3
Beyond Basic Training	There is a consensus about the need for refresher courses. Beyond this a variety of training needs are identified.	Chapter 2
Successful Methods	Training was perceived as successful when it involved practical activities relevant to the contexts in which the part-timer operated. Trainers had to be credible and preferably possess recent, relevant adult education experience.	Chapter 3
Successful Forms of Training	Courses concentrated over two days, at weekends were popular. However, training should not be too time-consuming. Distance learning was not favoured.	Chapter 2
On-the-Job Training	Working alongside and meeting experienced staff was highly valued. We cannot over-emphasise the demand for on-the-job support and evaluation of work. Such support was reported as being more in evidence in ABE units and in the voluntary sector than in mainstream adult education.	Chapter 2
Training Provision	Most of the training needs identified were catered for in national terms. Access to particular courses could be difficult. The main problems were lack of full-time staff and adequate budgets to provide courses.	Chapter 3
Lack of Training	Evening class tutors, subject specialists and outreach workers seem to be offered fewer training opportunities than ABE staff and new staff in some areas.	Chapter 3
Attitudes towards modules	Most part-time staff seem in favour of modules. Employers and trainers are less sure.	Chapter 3
Need for greater clarity of purposes of adult education in the local authority sector	ABE and the WEA seemed to have a clear view of their aims and objectives. Training was organised to meet these. Mainstream local authority workers seem less clear and this does not help in identifying training needs.	Chapters 2 and 4

Key Points for Consideration by Trainers

While we are not in a position to make recommendations for future training provision, we felt that it was worth drawing the attention of providers of training to the following key findings from our research.

Clarity of Purpose
Training needs are more easily identified within organisations with clearly defined aims. As mentioned above, the difference between ABE, the WEA and mainstream adult education in this respect was striking.

Are your organisation's overall aims clearly defined? Is the relationship between training and the organisation's aims explicit?

Relevance
Training has to be practical and relevant to be perceived as successful.

Does your training develop the skills staff require to carry out their jobs effectively? Are they given the opportunity to practice their skills as part of their training? Are staff consulted about their training needs?

On-the-job training
On-the-job training is perceived as highly effective and desirable by part-time workers.

Are new part-time workers given the opportunity to work alongside experienced colleagues? If not, why?

Previous experience
All part-timers require appropriate training regardless of previous work experience. Trainers should not assume that teachers are adequately trained to work with adults becuase of their qualifications..

Do you make any assumptions about the suitability of part-timers' previous training for their adult education activities?

Trainer credibility
Trainers with recent experience in the field, or who are also practitioners are regarded as the most credibile. Being an effective practitioner is not in itself enough to guarantee being an effective trainer.

Are the trainers trained? Is their effectiveness assessed?

Modules
If training is developed using a modular approach, information and marketing are priorities.

Are you aware of the modular approach? Do you feel that modules could address your training needs? Does your staff know about modules?

Payment
The issue of payment for training must be addressed.

Are part-time staff expected to undertake training in their own time? What alternatives are there?

Planning and provision
The existence of a designated 'lead person' responsible for training and readily accessible information about training provision and take-up in the local authority sector would greatly facilitate strategic planning.

How is training policy formulated? What information and support services are available to policy makers? Who is responsible for implementing training policy?

Background

Introduction

In 1987 research on the training needs of part-time community education workers was commissioned. Why was research necessary? We have no wish to chart the history of the emergence of training in community education. Suffice it to say that a series of reports, including two government reports, the Alexander Report (1975), Carnegy Report (1977) and a report by the Scottish Community Education Council (SCEC), Training for Change (1984) had stressed the need to review the training needs and training provision for community education workers. The focus on part-time staff was seen as particularly important since they represent a large work force. Indeed, reliable figures for the size of this work force have been difficult to come by. An indication of the size is that there are over 50,000 volunteers within youth organisations, the community education services have more than 20,000 voluntary or part-time staff and adult basic education has approximately 4,000 tutors employed as volunteers or part-time staff members. Clearly the quality of the contribution of such staff is important.

In dealing with such large numbers, employed by a range of organisations, targeted at different sections of the population we had to be clear about:

- the focus of the research;
- how we were to collect information.

The details which follow provide the information needed to put our chapters on research findings in context. It is important to stress right from the beginning, that we are **not** claiming that our findings are generalisable to all part-time workers in Scotland.

The focus of the research

In general focus of the research was on the training needs of part-time staff and on how adequately these needs were being met. However, we needed to develop a more specific focus in order to be clear about the kinds of information which would be most useful in identifying needs and in making sense of perceptions of the adequacy of training. Accordingly we developed the focus of the research as being:

- the essential characteristics of the roles of part-time staff;
- the kinds of training necessary to support staff in these roles;
- the satisfaction and dissatisfaction with existing training;
- the factors which determine whether provision is satisfactory;
- attitudes towards a modular system of training.

In seeking information about these matters we talked to part-time workers, their immediate employers and those involved in training. It was not always possible to distinguish clearly among

these groups. Immediate employers, for example, were often involved in providing training as were part-timers themselves. Details of those interviewed are given in Table 1.2. First of all, we describe how we chose those to be interviewed.

How did we collect information?

It was clearly impossible to collect information from all those concerned with adult education in Scotland. In selecting a sample we chose three areas which provided the possibility of contrasting perspectives on training needs and provision:

- an inner city area;
- a rural area;
- a mixed area of large towns with a rural hinterland.

Even within these areas, however, it was not possible to collect information from all those concerned with adult education. We therefore divided adult education into two categories:

- local authority sector;
- voluntary sector.

Within the local authority sector we identified three categories of workers:

- subject/craft tutors taking traditional adult education evening classes generally held in schools;
- outreach workers based in community centres/schools facilitating or leading groups; and concerned with issues rather than specialist subjects;
- adult basic education tutors helping adults to improve communication and numeracy skills.

The first two categories may be termed mainstream workers as they are directly employed by the community education service which would be responsible for their training. Adult Basic Education (ABE), on the other hand, often forms a separate unit within the local authority sector and has particular training structures for part-time paid and voluntary tutors.

In each sector we interviewed a sample of:

- part-time adult educators;
- their immediate employers;
- their trainers.

In deciding whom to interview we took the advice of the Community Education Department in the particular area. The main criterion for inclusion in the sample was that of salience of provision. In other words we chose those catering for the largest numbers of adults in each area. Table 1.1 gives details of the organisations involved in the research.

Table 1.1: Organisations involved in the research

	Inner City	Rural	Mixed
Local Authority	Outreach Workers	Subject/Craft	Subject/Craft
		Outreach Workers	Outreach Workers
		ABE	ABE
Voluntary	*	WEA	WEA

* Due to unforeseen circumstances none of the Workers Educational Association (WEA) tutors came to the interviews that had been scheduled.

A total of 32 interviews were held across three areas. Details of these are given in Table 1.2

Table 1.2: Total numbers interviewed

	Part-time Workers	Employers/Trainers	Total
Local Authority	15	9	24
Voluntary Sector	6	2	8
Totals	21	11	32

As mentioned above the distinctions between employers, trainers and part-timers were not always clear cut. Indeed, we have grouped employers and trainers together as a category because in the overwhelming majority of cases employers were also involved in training. Table 1.3 shows the numbers interviewed by case-study area.

Table 1.3: Numbers interviewed by case-study area

	Local authority		Voluntary sector	
	Part-timers	Employers/Trainers	Part-timers	Employers/Trainers
Inner City	3	3	*	-
Rural	6	2	4	1
Mixed	6	4	2	1
Totals	15	9	6	2

All the interviews were tape-recorded and lasted on average around 45 minutes. The interviews were semi-structured. Questions covering each of the research topics were devised and a series of probes for each area developed. However, there was no fixed order for asking the questions and no set way of moving from one area to another. Instead, the interviewer was responsive to the points being made by the respondent and used these to move from one topic to another. Transcriptions of a sample of these interviews provided the basis for analysis.

Are the findings generalisable?

It would clearly be inappropriate to suggest that the findings from the small numbers interviewed in the case-studies are generalisable to all part-time adult educators in Scotland. However, the advantage of the in-depth interview is that it allows the flavour of their concerns to emerge. This permits the reader to judge whether the kinds of concerns being expressed by our sample strikes chords with their own situation. Furthermore, the emergence of similarities of concerns of adult educators in different parts of the country and working in very different circumstances, encourage the view that we are not reporting the idiosyncratic opinions of a small number of workers. Indeed, the insights provided by intensive interviewing are preferable to the necessary limited information

provided by large-scale surveys. While views on training needs and the adequacy of current provision are bound to vary according to local circumstances, we hope those most actively involved in adult education will be encouraged to reconsider their own policy and practice in the light of the broad thrust of the views reported.

We have also undertaken a national survey of training provision and this does allow us to present a snapshot of the range and content of courses across the country. This could only provide a flavour of the national picture as it was difficult to collect up-to-date and accurate information and the resources of the project did not allow the data to be cross-checked.

We begin by reporting our case-study data and considering the variety of roles which part-time adult education workers play.

2

Training needs

In this chapter we concentrate on the training needs of part-timers in adult education as seen by themselves and their employers/trainers. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to consider the range of roles which part-timers are seen as playing, the educational activities in which they are engaged and their employment experience. The identification of these helps to put comments about training needs in context.

Roles of part-timers in adult education

Part-time tutors see themselves and are seen by others as playing a range of roles. They did not always offer specific labels for these roles but for the sake of clarity we have tried to identify the categories listed in Table 2.1 based on the way in which they described the qualities they required and how they carried out their responsibilities.

Table 2.1: Roles of part-time staff

• Adviser/Friend	• Organiser/Manager
• Co-ordinator	• Programme Developer
• Counsellor	• Recruiter
• Facilitator	• Resource Worker
• Group Worker	• Teacher
• Leader	• Trainer
• Motivator	

Clearly the balance among this diversity of roles varied according to the particular contexts part-timers found themselves in. Given the small size of our sample we cannot attribute any significance to slight variations in emphasis between the voluntary and local authority sectors. Much more significant, however, were the contrasting views of their roles between the three categories of workers and it is interesting to speculate on the reasons for this.

Subject specialists taking evening classes saw themselves only as 'teachers' and seemed to view their adult education work as an extension of their daytime school-teaching role. While acknowledging differences between adult education and child eduction these differences were perceived in terms of motivation rather than learning styles. To oversimplify, children needed more encouragement to learn; adults attended classes because they were already interested and did not need motivating. The teacher took responsibility for deciding on the course content, or followed a syllabus to prepare students for examinations. By contrast, non-specialists involved in outreach

work saw themselves as facilitators, group or resource workers. The latter term could imply that they were used as a resource because of their knowledge and experience. For example, a mother with older children could help new mothers in parenting; in this context the experienced mother would act as a chairwoman in a group of new mothers, perhaps encouraging them to talk about the problems in bringing up young children and ways of coping with them. The resource worker operating in this way, would **not** see herself as an expert in child-rearing in the way the French teacher would see herself as an expert in French. A resource worker would also be responsible for providing resource materials, such as worksheets, questionnaires or information from other agencies.

The term facilitator, describes a process of helping people to learn by drawing on their previous skills, knowledge and experience rather than the didactic transmission of knowledge by lecturing or dictating notes, and reflects the methods used, such as group work, discussion and role play. This approach is summed up by the following quote by a part-time tutor:

> My job is to bring (the participants) out of themselves, I never think of it as educating them to be better mothers or anything like that.

While these differences in perception undoubtedly reflect the different aims, purposes and general context of their respective educational activities, it is significant that ABE and WEA tutors who received the most training, showed the greatest awareness of the wide range of roles that they might play as adult educators. Although only three subject specialists were interviewed, the difference in their responses was so marked that we felt it was worth drawing attention to.

It is also important to take the respondents' employment experience into account for two reasons. Firstly, it affects their prospects for paid employment in adult education. Secondly it provides an idea of the different backgrounds from which adult education workers come, and the strengths and weaknesses they might bring to this area of work, which has implications for their training needs. Unlike our respondents from youth and community development work, the range of previous or full-time occupations of part-timers in adult education was limited. Our respondents included a librarian, a couple of office workers, a playgroup worker and a social worker but the majority were trained school teachers. While some, notably the subject specialists, felt that their training qualified them to teach adults, most of the ABE and WEA tutors questioned the validity of this assumption. We discuss this point further in Chapters 3 and 4.

Nearly all the part-time tutors interviewed were female, only three were male, and several had young children to care for. Their length of service ranged from about ten months to fourteen years with the majority having worked in adult education from one to five years.

There was much diversity in the range of educational activities undertaken by respondents. These include traditional adult education evening classes in arts and crafts or specialist subjects; outreach work with disadvantaged or other special groups and adult basic education. The local authority sector provision encompasses all these different fields and includes the specialist ABE unit. The WEA is gradually moving away from traditional subject based liberal education towards more outreach work with disadvantaged groups. While we tried to maintain a balance between all these

different areas in selecting respondents for interview, we were able to include only a small number of tutors working in traditional liberal adult education, none of whom were from the voluntary sector. Details of the educational activities are provided in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Educational activities undertaken by part-time staff

• Accountancy	1	• Parenting Skills	2
• Basic Communication Skills	11	• Photography	1
• Budget Cookery	1	• Pottery	1
• Carry on Learning	1	• Reminiscence Work	1
• Fabric Construction	1	• Social Studies	1
• French 'O' Grade	1	• Study Skills	1
• Health Choices	2	• Typewriting	1
• Media Studies	1	• Understanding Modern Europe	1
• Opportunities for Women	1	• Women's Studies	2

Adult education workers operated in similar settings, such as community centres, schools or special bases, but there were significant differences in the amount of support, in the form of direct help from full or part-time colleagues, on which staff could call; ABE workers received the most support and subject specialists received the least. Unlike youth workers, adult education workers tend to work single-handed. The exceptions were ABE tutors in one case-study area, who worked on a one-to-one basis with students in a group setting, and a pair of WEA tutors jointly leading a group. Whether working on their own or alongside colleagues, WEA and ABE tutors had a strong sense of being in a team under the leadership of a co-ordinator or organiser who supported them through regular contact. By contrast, subject specialists rarely received formal support or felt part of a community education team and could work in isolated settings. Outreach workers reported receiving support from immediate full-time colleagues but this tended to be offered on an informal basis and was not part of the employing organisation's structure as in the case of the WEA and ABE units.

In sum therefore, the picture reflects some diversity in terms of:

- roles played by part-time staff;
- educational activities;
- access to immediate colleagues

but similarity in educational and employment backgrounds. Despite the complexity of adult education provision, distinct patterns of training needs were revealed. We consider these below.

The content of training

In this section we focus on the **content** of training. We concentrate on the similarities between the voluntary and local government sectors and between employers' and part-time staff's views. Where there are clear differences of opinion and emphasis between the groups, we draw attention to them.

Before considering the expressed needs it is necessary briefly to outline current induction and basic training provision which varied enormously between and within the two sectors. These will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

Mainstream adult education

In contrast to our findings in youth work, there were no standard basic courses that all adult education workers had to undertake at the outset of their employment in the case-study areas. Only the intermediate case-study area stipulated formal induction training for new evening class tutors as part of regional policy. In this area all potential recruits were issued with a handbook and required to attend a two evening selection/induction programme. The first evening comprised discussions based on the handbook and difficulties tutors might face. Staff selected after individual interviews attended a second evening which was concerned with methods, planning and administration. The rural area had introduced a similar programme (not a prerequisite for employment) while the inner city did not consider this a priority and had no formal induction procedure. None of the case-study areas had formal induction procedures for outreach workers at the time of interview; informal induction was left to the immediate employer or full-time worker. Any additional training tended to be offered on an ad hoc basis if at all.

Adult basic education

The ABE units included in our our survey comprised teams led by full or part-time organisers responsible for training and supporting volunteers and part-timers. Training was undertaken by a training team consisting of the organiser and experienced part-time tutors. The latter acted as tutor - co-ordinators or advisers providing support and advice for those they have trained. Induction and basic training were well established and highly structured in both the ABE units beginning with an information and contract setting event followed by basic training lasting six weeks in one area and nine in the other. The introductory session, a vital part of ABE training strategy, is intended to give volunteers a clear idea of what the work entails and of the commitment expected of them, while saving on time and resources by allowing unsuitable candidates to 'self-select out' at the start. Volunteers also meet their future colleagues and the trainers who later, as tutor-advisers, will guide them and provide the basis for the development of a support network.

Voluntary sector

The WEA followed the ABE model but on a much smaller scale. Area teams were led by Tutor Organisers who recruited, trained and supported workers. Training was also offered on a national basis. The WEA found it more difficult to implement regular group induction as there were rarely sufficient numbers of new tutors starting at any one time to make it worthwhile. However, introductory sessions were held in one area and other informal induction procedures were used to ease new tutors into their jobs. Handbooks and handouts were also available.

The need for induction

Respondents in all areas identified a need for some form of induction training which may be defined as an introduction to their new work setting, and an understanding of what was expected of them and what they may expect from their employers. The precise content of the training and how long it should last varied according to the particular settings in which part-timers were working. Regional variations in attitudes to training were particularly pronounced in mainstream community education. However, there was sufficient similarity amongst respondents' views of what should be included to produce the list contained in Table 2.3 arranged in descending order of frequency of mention.

Table 2.3. Content for induction

- job remit - what is being expected of the part-timer
- the resources/equipment readily available
- introduction to key personnel (ie other part-timers, firstline help)
- the overall aims of the organisation
- administrative procedures

The amount of time to be spent on any of these activities clearly depends on the part-timers familiarity with the organisation and setting in which adult education is being undertaken. A school teacher from a community school taking an evening class in her specialist subject, for example, would have minimal induction requirements. In contrast ABE volunteer tutors with no adult education experience would have all the needs listed in Table 2.3.

The level of satisfaction with current induction procedures varied considerably. At the top end of the scale were ABE tutors who were clear about the aims of the organisation and their role in achieving those aims. By contrast, inexperienced part-time outreach workers were uncertain about what they were suposed to be doing, did not feel part of a team and had little understanding of the aims of adult education. It is worth speculating on why there are such great differences in the training experiences of these categories of workers.

No doubt the reasons for this are rooted in the historical and structural development of the organisations. Both the WEA and ABE began as movements with clearly defined aims which have continued to be very focused. Tutor training was accorded a high priority in ABE policy from the outset. WEA tutors are full members of the organisation (as are the students) which provides them with a forum to voice their needs and contribute to staff development policy. In addition, ABE and WEA staff belong to teams led by colleagues with considerable experience in the same field who therefore have a good understanding of the demands of the job. Mainstream community education on the other hand, despite policy reviews and re-organisation, lacks the necessary infrastructure and full-time staff with training and experience in adult education to develop a similar approach to the WEA or ABE. Outreach workers, for example, tend to be supervised by full-time community

education staff who are responsible for implementing the much broader and ambitious aims of the service and may themselves be unsure of their own role in achieving those aims. They may also lack an understanding of part-timers' needs because of deficiencies in their own training.

The question of how appropriate school-teaching qualifications were for adult education was raised again in relation to induction training. On the one hand evening class tutors and their full-time colleagues were less convinced of the need for induction training believing that as qualified teachers they were well able to cope with adult classes. On the other hand some former teachers working in other areas of adult education considered their past experience to be a hindrance and saw a need for induction.

Basic training

The distinction between induction and basic training is a fine one and was not always made by those we interviewed. However, for the sake of clarity, we thought it would be helpful to distinguish between becoming familiar with the setting in which one is operating, ie what we have called induction, and the development of key basic skills necessary to perform the job of part-time adult educator. Table 2.4 shows the kinds of basic skills content identified by our sample. They are presented in alphabetical order as there was no emphasis on particular content.

Table 2.4: Basic training: suggested content

- adult learning theory
- communications skills
- coping with stress
- group work (leading groups; group dynamics)
- introducing a course
- motivating students
- moving students on
- negotiating curricula
- programme planning
- raising confidence
- teaching/instruction techniques (role play; experiential learning)
- where to start

It is noteworthy that individuals (ABE and WEA tutors) who had received the most training had a much clearer and detailed idea of the needs of a new tutor as well as the training required to support them in their own work. This would suggest that training raises awareness of skills and knowledge gaps, as well as of the indirect benefits of training events which will be discussed below. No doubt the evaluation process built into training events also encourages the participants to focus their minds on their needs and how these may be met, particularly when they are sure that their suggestions will be followed up.

Mainstream tutors on the other hand were more vague about their needs and had much lower expectations of training provision. The impression given was that, following induction training, they would be content with occasional discussion groups with tutors working in the same field and skills refresher courses every few years. This is partly connected to the fact that the full-time school teachers would have access to in-service training in any case, but it may also reflect a lack of awareness of the benefits of structured relevant training of which they had little or no experience.

As we shall see in Chapter 3 opinions varied on the quality and accessibility of basic training on offer. For the moment, however, our concern is with the particular needs identified.

The balance of time devoted to any of the topics listed above is clearly dependent on a whole range of factors including the features of the particular setting in which the worker is operating, the attributes of the worker and the time available for training. Indeed, the perceived relevance and applicability of the training was one of the indicators of high quality training. All we are doing here is describing the areas in which basic training was seen as necessary. We return to this below.

So far we have concentrated on the training needs of inexperienced part-time staff and have seen that there is general agreement about these needs from those interviewed whether they be employer/trainer, part-time worker, voluntary sector or local government sector. The next question to be asked concerns the training needs of the experienced staff. Although there were differences in details, definite patterns in demand did emerge.

Beyond basic training

Again it is difficult to draw the line between basic and advanced or in-service training as needs and eligibility for training are entirely dependent on the context in which the individual works and the rules of the organisation. For instance, in ABE all tutors, whether voluntary or paid, new or experienced, are offered the opportunity to attend the same in-service training courses once they have completed their initial training. New tutors might find themselves working in areas where special conditions operate and would therefore require special skills and knowledge. For the purposes of this research we have differentiated between the initial training needs of new staff and needs that might emerge once they have started work. Table 2.5 lists the further training needs as mentioned by our respondents in descending order of frequency.

Table 2.5: Further Training Needs

• regular meetings with workers in same subject area
• skills refresher
• new materials and ideas
• developing resources
• counselling
• role play
• assertiveness
• welfare benefits/rights
• special needs
• computer skills
• video work

There are three points worth emphasising here. First of all, while the numbers were too small to be sector specific, it is worth noting that there was much greater commonality between the voluntary and local government sector than we found in our research on youth work, where a number of differences emerged between the uniformed and non-uniformed organisations. Secondly, as we found in youth and community development work, there seems to be a demand across the sectors for refresher or up-dating courses. Given that some of the respondents had been involved in part-time work for five years or more and tend to work in isolation, this kind of demand is not surprising. Thirdly, staff in both sectors were interested in acquiring new skills and knowledge. Again, the reasons for this are obvious, as part-timers gain experience they perceive needs that are particular to their own contexts and to their personal development. In many ways, then, our data suggests a core of induction and basic training, complemented by a range of optional supplementary training targeted at particular issues and regular 'refresher' courses.

Features of successful training

Almost regardless of the particular content of training there were certain features of training which seemed to encourage success. We should make it clear, of course, that we have no independent measures of whether training was successful. We are reporting the views of part-timers and their employers/trainers, on what they believe makes training successful. The key features are training which:

- includes opportunities to meet other part-time staff;
- can be applied directly to the part-timer's own situation - (relevance);
- is 'delivered' by those with credibility ie those with recent experience of the reality of adult education;
- caters for special requirements eg creche facilities;
- does not take up too much time.

Let us now consider each one of these features a little more closely.

Opportunities to meet other part-time staff

In common with youth and community development workers, adult education workers in all sectors placed meeting other staff, whether formally at training events or informally at a resource centre, high on their list of training needs. One of the main benefits of meeting was the opportunity to relieve anxiety about how good a job part-timers were doing. The realisation that other people were experiencing similar problems was very reassuring and went a long way towards reducing feelings of isolation. They also recognised the value of sharing experiences and learning skills from each other, exchanging contacts and building networks. The latter might range from informal support networks to establishing a list of 'guest speakers' who would be effective for the group.

Relevant training

It is important to remember that part-timers have many demands on their time in addition to their adult education commitments. Training, which takes place in staff's own time, therefore, has to compete with these other demands and if it is not 'right on target' there is a strong possibility of part-timers being reluctant to participate in further training events. In order to reduce this risk trainers encourage part-timers to identify their training needs and organise programmes to meet these needs. Part-timers particularly appreciated the opportunity to practice methods that could be applied directly to teaching situations:

> Paired introductions were used and I was able to use this in my class ... participation in training sessions was not dissimilar to the approach used in class.

Credibility of the trainer

If the trainer was perceived to have direct experience of the kinds of situations part-timers found themselves in, the 'training message' was more likely to be taken seriously. This is not unique to community or adult education. Those involved in pre-service teacher training, for example, are encouraged to obtain recent, relevant experience of today's schools. As one part-timer put it:

> I think trainers should take classes because things are always changing.

This attitude is in keeping with the general approach used in adult education of learning through sharing experiences. Working as a tutor was also regarded an important asset by trainers:

> I have certainly found that any training course I have run has been successful, I think, because I am teaching myself, I know the kinds of problems tutors face, I am experiencing them as well.

Family commitments

People are often attracted to part-time employment because family commitments prevent them from working full-time. This is certainly true of part-timers in adult education who are predominantly

female and frequently have young children as was the case with several of our respondents. These individuals might be discouraged from attending training events by having to make special arrangements which might be costly. To cater for their needs it is essential to provide creche facilities or reimbursement of child-minding expenses.

Time

As mentioned above, the amount of spare time part-timers can spend on training is limited. Preparation, normally done outside working hours, is frequently time consuming and they may be obliged to attend other meetings in connection with their work for which they are not paid. This problem is compounded in rural areas where travelling time to a training event can be considerable. Ways of overcoming this included:

- working with an experienced tutor in the same area;
- training weekends;
- using a 'starter pack' (containing ice breaking exercises, model materials and suggestions for activities);
- distance learning materials (although not to the exclusion of group contact);
- paid training.

Despite comments regarding time constraints, training weekends were popular. We end this chapter by looking at our respondents' preferred forms of training. These were on-the-job support and evaluation, observation, training weekends, starter packs and handbooks. It must be emphasised, however, that ideally, a staff development programme would include **all** these features. In addition the issue of paid training was raised.

Preferred forms of training

Clear patterns emerged in all areas about the preferred ways of delivering training. There were some differences in emphasis, however, within the local authority sector particularly concerning the amount and frequency of training required.

On-the-job support and evaluation

The need for regular support, whether from full-time staff or fellow part-timers, was universal. As we indicated earlier, the levels of support available varied across and within case-study areas. Part-timers in mainstream adult education, for example, reported that they were not conscious of being part of a community education team; they rarely had any contact with other tutors or their employers and were left very much to their own devices. This was echoed by tutors in the voluntary sector in the rural area. Reasons for lack of support from full-time staff varied and included:

- other commitments, so regular support not given a high priority;
- limited resources and staff shortages;
- lack of awareness of the need for support.

When support was available it was greatly appreciated. The kinds of areas where support was valued included:

- the opportunity to work alongside an experienced worker with guidelines, such as a checklist, on identifying methods and skills followed by a discussion on what had been observed;
- being offered purposeful and constructive criticism by experienced workers/trainers, perhaps at training events or following a visit by the experienced worker to the part-timer's class;
- access to an experienced worker or full-time staff who could provide advice, assistance or useful contacts;
- structured staff development and regular training events.

The need for support through regular contact with colleagues cannot be overstated, particularly in rural areas, where tutors working in small communities were very aware of having to maintain confidentiality:

> No tales out of school is never truer than with adults and in a small community if either of us was indiscrete enough we could be naming names and talking about our experiences ... yet you're bursting to share your experiences so it is a safety valve having another tutor who is following these unwritten rules.

Given sufficient financial resources and sensitivity to part-timers' needs, intricate support networks can be developed which are very successful. ABE tutors in the intermediate area were highly satisfied with the support they received. Central to the support network was the resource centre where tutors, trainers, full-time workers, volunteers and students could meet regularly both formally and informally. Well stocked and equipped, the centre was staffed by volunteers developing teaching materials alongside a part-time paid tutor. Tutors in the rural area too found it worthwhile to travel into the nearest city to meet colleagues informally at their resource base.

A similar role was played by offices in the voluntary sector. In the rural area tutors' expenses were paid once a session to encourage them to visit the office to browse through resource files and bookshelves. Office staff provided secretarial support and helped tutors to design and reproduce materials.

Observation

Several tutors suggested that novices should be given the opportunity to watch one or more experienced tutors at work as part of their basic training. To be of value the exercise would have to be directed or structured in some way. In one such case a trainee was guided by an 'observer's checklist' designed to enable her to identify both obvious and 'hidden' skills and hopefully pick up:

> techniques used by tutors for encouraging people to speak ... how they bring a class together, how you present materials.

To some extent this method is well established in ABE where many group tutors may have started out as volunteers assisting paid tutors working with groups and therefore have considerable experience to draw on at training events were they may critically analyse what they have observed.

Another advantage of this approach is that it is a very economical way of providing basic training in areas where new tutors are few and far between.

Weekends

Both part-timers and employers felt that the benefits of concentrating training over two or more days, usually at the weekend, were well worth the disruption they may cause in the participants' private lives. In fact, many workers said that having to give up several evenings would be more inconvenient. Residential weekends had particular advantages:

> Because you are having meals with people you are talking to each other outwith formal sessions. You can pack a lot more in, people are more relaxed because they are not having to rush home.

Another trainer, however, had mixed feelings about covering a lot of ground in a short period of time:

> We did a Friday evening and all day Saturday ... this worked very well as the group gelled very quickly, normally that would have been three or four evening sessions ... the advantages were the gelling, the group cohesion ... The disadvantage was that everyone got very tired and they were expected to take in a lot over a short period of time.

Another drawback mentioned was that those who were unable to attend these events could miss out on several important training issues. To try and accommodate all trainees, the ABE organiser in the rural area offered volunteer tutors the opportunity to attend the basic training course either in the evenings or on successive Saturdays, or even a mixture of both.

Starter packs

Packs were identified as useful tools for tutors, particularly new tutors who were unsure of where to find suitable material or how to structure their courses. They also represented a considerable saving in preparation time. As one tutor commented on the WEA's 'Getting Started Pack':

> It was fantastic really, if I had had that at the beginning ... I wouldn't have read and read so wildly and torn my hair out.

This opinion was shared by an employer who wished to see:

> facilities for turning some frequently occurring topics into model materials so that we could actually issue model materials to people.

Handbooks

Several organisations within the case-study areas provided tutors with handbooks containing useful information about the organisation and administrative procedures which also met other needs. For instance, the WEA handbook and handouts had been produced with the intention of combating isolation and providing answers to the tutors' most frequently asked questions. A recently issued handbook:

> tells them about the WEA and its place in the adult education world, about their role as a tutor, it gives some advice on what to do on the first night, how to involve people, some methods, some resources that might be useful, practical information about the organisation ... what they are entitled to, how we pay them.

Paid training

The issue of paid training was raised by both part-timers and their immediate employers. Part-timers are only paid for contact time, not for going to meetings nor to training events even when attendance at these is a condition of employment. The following comment would strike a chord across the sectors:

> you have to remember ... that we're paid only for the hours we work and there is a hell of an amount of preparation ... in a utopia you would pay people to come to training.

A craft teacher reported that her contract stipulated that she had to do a specific amount of training annually but was not offerred any financial assistance, nor were there any appropriate courses in the region. To fulfil this obligation she attended staff meetings which were largely irrelevant to her needs. Furthermore, part-timers may find themselves at training events with full-time staff who are being paid to attend. This could compound the feeling of being exploited reported by many in connection with the insecurity of the terms of their employment.

Summary

In this chapter we have described training needs, the features seen as promoting successful training and preferred forms of training provision.

We have indicated three levels of content for training, namely:

- induction;
- basic training;
- additional training.

We have suggested that there are strong patterns of commonality for induction, and basic training, and additional training needs. The features of successful training are:

- opportunities to meet other part-time staff;
- relevance and direct applicability of content;
- credibility of the trainer;
- reasonable time commitment.

As far as preferred forms of training were concerned there was enthusiastic support for:

- extended or residential training;
- on-the-job support;
- starter packs.

and some support for a handbook or staff manual.

3

Perceptions of national training provision

This chapter is concerned with the perceptions of national training provision. We begin by looking at the range of courses provided across the country. This is followed by a consideration of perceptions of the quality of training at a local level in our case-study areas. Finally, we discuss our respondents' views on modular training.

The national picture

In addition to our work in the three case-study areas described in Chapter 1, we undertook a more comprehensive survey of training provision for part-time staff. This survey was conducted by a postal questionnaire.

It was difficult to identify all the providers of training as no readily accessible data base exists. The following steps were taken in an attempt to ensure as wide a response to our questionnaire as possible:

- all Principal Community Education Officers (PCEO) in Regional and Island Authorities and each division of Strathclyde were contacted;
- where community education or their equivalent departments indicated they did not have sole responsibility for training other departments were contacted. These included Leisure and Recreation and Social Work Departments;
- the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations was approached to identify Councils of Social/Voluntary Service. Each Council was contacted.

We asked these institutions and departments to provide us with information on:

- the number and title of courses offered to part-time adult educators;
- the objectives of the course;
- the number participating;
- the length of the course and the distribution of course hours (eg one day, six hours over three evenings);
- the categories of voluntary and part-time staff receiving no training and the reasons for this;
- how training was structured generally within the organisation.

Information was supplied from most of the Regions, Islands and Divisions. Central, Fife, Orkney and Shetland provided no returns from departments responsible for adult education. In the voluntary sector only one WEA division responded.

In addition, reliable statistical information was not always readily accessible. Information on training provision was generally held by local area teams, not centrally. While there are undoubtedly

good reasons for devolving responsibility for training to local area workers, we would point out that holding such information at Regional/Divisional level could greatly facilitate strategic planning. In one area respondents misinterpreted our questionnaire assuming that it referred only to youth work and did not, therefore, provide information about other training events.

For the reasons outlined above we cannot claim to present a comprehensive survey but can offer only an incomplete picture of courses available to volunteer and part-time workers in adult education between April 1987 and March 1988. However, even within these limitations similar patterns in training provision throughout Scotland did emerge. To allow comparisons and highlight contrasts we report on training provision in the local authority and voluntary sector separately.

Training provision: The Local Authority Sector

Table 3.1 shows the numbers of courses provided and illustrates the kinds of topic covered in these courses. As contextual information we also provide estimates of the population statistics for each Region/Island as supplied by the General Register Office for Scotland for June 1989.

Table 3.1: Numbers of courses provided for part-time adult education workers local authority sector April 1987 - March 1988.

Local Authority Sector	No of Courses	Examples of Content	Estimated Population (to nearest 1,000)
Borders	9	Community education induction; ABE group work; counselling; ABE induction.	103,000
Dumfries & Galloway	2	ABE induction.	147,000
Grampian	8	Communications skills; health; reminiscence; induction. (No returns from ABE)	501,000
Highland	9	ABE: basic; special needs; trainer training; video.*	202,000
Lothian	18	ABE: assertiveness; group work; women's issues; planning; materials; tutor induction.	741,000
Strathclyde			2,317,000
Argyll & Bute	2	ABE	
Ayr	12	ABE: induction, ESL; guidance; computers; special needs; arts & crafts;* Open University (OU); group work.	
Dumbarton	40	ABE: basic; special needs; computers; ESL; counselling. Open University short courses.	
Glasgow	11	ABE: induction; assessment; methods/materials; women's education; problem solving; drugs*; group leadership.*	
Lanark	4	Adult learning; video*; artwork.*	
Renfrew	11*	Introductory/basic community education and basic leadership courses.	
	8*	Resources; drugs; counselling; audio-visual; reprographics;	
	4*	Assertiveness for women.	
Tayside	14	ABE: groupwork; annual review of training needs; ESL; computers; working with the handicapped. 50+ education.	394,000
Western Isles	0		31,000
Total	152		

*Courses aimed at all those working in a part-time paid or voluntary capacity in community education.

We indicated at the beginning of the chapter that we would not wish to claim complete accuracy for the numbers of the courses offered. The return from the Borders, for example, pointed out that our questionnaire did not consider training on a one to one basis in the workplace and that this was often the more appropriate form of training in rural areas. Similarly in Lothian, many part-

time workers attend courses offered by the South East Scotland Training Association (SESTA) but statistics on take-up were not available. Nevertheless, our data suggest that training targeted specifically at part-time workers in adult education is not considered a priority outside ABE.

The returns from areas where no training in any branch of community education had taken place usually identified lack of resources, human and financial as the main reason:

> We have neither the manpower nor the financial resources with which to train people.
>
> (Western Isles)

Form, Content and Take-up of Training

There were a range of training opportunities available. These included evening courses, for example, one two hour session per week over three to six weeks, half or full-day courses, distance learning packs, residential weekends and non-residential weekends. Table 3.1 gives examples of the content covered by the training. Our research suggests that most of the training needs identified by the case-studies are covered by the training offered. However, the availability of training in any part of Scotland varied considerably. As far as the local authority sector is concerned, our survey suggests that the amount and frequency of training depends on a number of factors:

- the priorities of the providers;
- the available budget;
- the uptake of courses;
- the availability of trainers;
- geographical situation;
- the qualifications of part-timers.

It is generally a combination of several of these factors, over which the community education service have little or no control, that limits training opportunities, as described in the examples quoted above. Returns from some Regions/Divisions mentioned that courses had to be cancelled due to lack of up-take. More usually, courses were not offered to subject specialists as they were employed for their specialism and were not seen as requiring further training:

> As all the adult education tutors are fully qualified teachers with considerable teaching experience, it was not deemed necessary or appropriate for this department to offer training for this category of staff.
>
> (Glasgow)

Table 3.2 lists staff who had not been offered training in 1987-88 and the reasons given for this.

Table 3.2: Staff receiving no training and the reasons for this

	Category of staff	Reason for no training
Borders	Part-time tutors (not specified) Some ABE tutors	Insufficient staff. Inappropriate national courses. Skill shortage among full-time staff. Cost.
Dumfries & Galloway	Adult education tutors	No training needs identified. No budget.
Grampian (one division)	Adult education tutors Adult group leaders Outreach workers	No training needs identified. Priority given to adolescent work.
Highland	Adult education tutors	Few new tutors. Insufficient demand. Work priorities elsewhere.
	Rural volunteers	Insufficient demand - preparing distance learning pack.
	Gaelic tutors	Awaiting new Scotvec Gaelic Module.
Lothian	Established adult education tutors	No policy for paid training. No budget available to run courses.
Argyll & Bute	All staff except ABE	Industrial action.
Dumbarton	Outreach workers	Lack of experience, time and resources. Intend to run courses 1988-89.
Glasgow (some divisions)	Adult education tutors	Qualifications considered adequate. Support available from Co-ordinator and Adult Education sub-team. Induction available.
	ABE tutors (one division)	Staff shortage.
Lanark	OU tutors (short courses in community education)	No training available.
Tayside	Arts staff ABE volunteer tutors	Qualifications considered to be sufficient. Did not take up training offer.

Table 3.2 shows that adult education tutors, particularly those with experience in the field, in mainstream community education are most likely to miss out on a share of the training budget and, priority tends to be given to induction for new part-time staff. As mentioned above, it is also commonly held that qualified teachers and craft specialists have undergone sufficient training and the value of further courses for part-time work was questioned:

> The average number of hours for part-time staff working in Outdoor Education/Arts is 56 hours per year. Is the investment of resources for these staff to attend training outwith their specific skill area sound? (Tayside)

In two areas, Renfrew and Ayr, all categories of staff in adult education were offered training although not all took advantage of it. Table 3.3 shows that the reason given for the provision of training opportunities is the existence of a high profile training team whose remit covers all branches of community education.

Table 3.3: Areas where all categories of staff were offered training and the reasons for this

Region/Division		Reason given
Ayr	Across the Division all categories were offered training in each Community Service Area.	One APCEO has a responsibility for training as part of remit. APCEO together with Area Officers comprise Divisional Training team.
Renfrew	'Training offered to all categories of staff at different levels. Many staff did not receive training perhaps they feel they have undertaken all the training necessary.'	Each area team has a 'lead person' for training. These members of staff have undertaken an assessed course and along with APCEO form the Divisional Training Group.

Who Provides Training?

With few exceptions training is provided by community education departments themselves either by immediate supervisors or specialist training staff. Certainly the predominance given to staff shortages as a reason for not providing training suggests a reliance on full-time community education staff not only as identifiers of training needs and organisers of provision but also as 'deliverers' of training. In some regions there was a marked reluctance to use outside providers stemming from the belief that to be relevant to the local context training had to be designed and delivered within the local area. Other regions, however, might wish to 'buy in' more outside training and there may be scope for developing training targeted at both the voluntary and local authority sectors. In the meantime it is worth noting the range of 'outside' trainers used for part-time staff.

Table 3.4: Outside organisations used for training by local authorities

Freelance tutors
Inverclyde Drug Line
Lochaber Training Centre
Moray House College of Education
Police
Scottish Community Education Council (SCEC)
Scottish Education and Action for Development (SEAD)
SESTA
The Number Shop

So far we have concentrated on the extent and take-up of training. We now turn to what part-time staff and their employers/trainers have to say about the quality of what was on offer.

Perceptions of the quality of training

It is important to recall that we have no independent indicators of the quality of training. We did not observe any training, for example, nor did we have access to any evaluation of training undertaken by providers. This section reports the views of those who had undergone training and is based on data from our three case-study areas.

As we mentioned in Chapter 2, there was an expressed need for induction and basic training. Within mainstream adult education such training was conspicuous by its absence, although formal induction had recently been introduced in two of the case-study areas. In striking contrast, the ABE units had well established training structures. Opinions on the adequacy and appropriateness of training were mixed, ranging from 'stimulating' and 'very effective' to 'irrelevant' and 'a waste of time'. Basic courses which were not specifically focused on individuals' teaching situation came in for particular criticism:

> Qualified teachers who had been teaching in secondary schools for a number of years were lumped together with ... craftsmen who were taking a leisure class.

> The problem lay in there being such a huge cross section... there were about sixty people there.

These comments, which both refer to the obligatory induction training in the mixed case-study area touch upon two important issues which are worth elaborating; the first concerning appropriate training for adult educators; and the second its delivery. The first arises from the assumption shared in varying degrees by the evening class tutors and their immediate employers, that school teachers are both qualified and competent to teach adults. These individuals reported that the obligatory

induction training caused widespread resentment among the teachers for this very reason. However, training can challenge and change this attitude. For instance, a respondent who had attended the event reported sharing the resentment at the beginning but, although critical of some aspects, felt that she had benefitted from it in terms of reassessing her approach to teaching adults and gaining confidence.

Preferred Forms of Delivery

As far as delivery was concerned, respondents favoured courses using group work techniques targeted at individuals working in similar subject areas or undertaking similar educational activities. Evening class teachers, for example, suggested that ideally their training should take pre-service experience into account while helping them to develop appropriate skills for educating adults in an informal setting. This coincides with the data from our youth work survey where general community education foundation courses were criticised as being irrelevant.

Courses biased towards practical activities were favoured more highly than those which included too much theory or 'were led from the front'. Training events were meant to provide a safe place in which participants could try out new ideas and receive feedback from trainers and colleagues:

> We did two weekend sessions on group leadership skills and having been a leader for about a year up to then it was very good to ... look and see what good practice was and see if I have been doing the right thing.

Criticisms of Training

When training had been provided it was generally considered as adequate, particularly in terms of increasing confidence. While a few specific courses were criticised for being poorly structured and delivered greatest disatisfaction was expressed in connection with the lack of training structures, lack of information about training, lack of monitoring of training and follow-up. Respondents particularly in mainstream adult education, were not always consulted as to their training needs and, in one case, had to fight to be accepted on a training course which was only open to full-time staff.

The difference between training provision in ABE and mainstream adult education is striking and reflects the clearly defined role of the former and the weighty generic remit of the latter. As in the case of the uniformed organisations in youth work, all ABE staff whether voluntary, part-time or full-time are made to feel part of a team with clear aims and objectives. Staff are regularly consulted as to their needs and offered relevant courses. They are also expected to contribute to the development of these. While there were criticisms of a few courses, respondents usually added the rider that these had been taken account of and appropriate changes had been made.

The level of satisfaction in the mixed case-study area ABE unit was particularly high. Training was offered every six to eight weeks and delivered at two levels, local and regional, in response to requests from the respective areas. The degree of satisfaction owed a lot to the existence of an

experienced local team and organiser enhanced by the existence of a Training Officer with regional responsibility. This was emphasised by the local organiser:

> It is very important that we are delivering the same quality/provision on a unit-wide basis. It allows you to share what you are doing with other areas and channel ideas through the (Training Officer) ... for anybody new coming in he would be absolutely vital.

In the rural area training opportunities were more limited by the lack of resources but staff expressed great satisfaction with the training events that had taken place. Unfortunately we are unable to report on ABE tutor training in the inner-city area as the potential respondents did not attend the interview. However, a youth worker, who was also a part-time ABE tutor, reported that training opportunities in the area were limited and support networks undeveloped in comparison with our other case-study areas.

Summary of perceptions of quality of training

To sum up, when available, basic training was greatly appreciated. Part-timers gained a great deal of confidence in their abilities and valued opportunities to practice their skills in a supportive group. It could also be used to recruit staff and build a strongly committed team. Lack of training opportunities, on the other hand, reinforced part-timers' feelings of isolation and lack of direction.

It is impossible to generalise about perceptions of quality of advanced or specialist courses as our respondents' experience of training was so limited outside ABE. However, if participants are not to feel that they are wasting their time, it is essential that training events are well organised and targeted on their particular needs. It is also worth emphasising that staff involvement in the development of appropriate training programmes, through prior consultation as well as built in evaluation and follow-up of training events, was regarded as an indicator of high quality training.

Voluntary sector provision

The response from the voluntary sector was very poor and we are therefore able to report provision only from the WEA. Even here our information is limited to the national survey returns from just one area and case-study data from another two. Table 3.5 gives examples of training, including national (British) events, attended by part-time staff.

Table 3.5: WEA Provision

	No of Courses	Examples of Content
National	4	women's studies, health, social and political education
Grampian	3	introductory session, annual training day, counselling
Lothian	3	group work skills, role play, video, reminiscence
Strathclyde	5	self defence for women, tutor role and programme development, student centred learning, evaluation through class visiting

On the whole the needs identified in the case-study areas and reported in Chapter 2 are being met. Apart from one category, all tutors were offered some form of induction training, basic training and specialist courses. Where there were insufficient numbers of new tutors for a group induction course to be viable, organisers provided individual training and regular support or arranged for a new tutor to work alongside an experienced tutor. The only category not to be offered any training comprised liberal arts (eg music appreciation, literature, art history) tutors as this is now a low priority area and currently being phased out.

Form and Take-Up of Training

As in the local authority sector, training was provided in a number of forms: residential weekends, whole days, or, less often, in two or three hour blocks over a number of evenings. Almost all the training was provided in-house; only one instance of a free-lance specialist taking a course was reported.

No inter-agency training in the sample year was reported although there had been in the past and it could be argued that there is scope for it given the many commonalities with groups within the local authority sector. Sharing training with other adult education agencies would certainly improve access to specialist courses which the WEA cannot afford to provide on a regular basis. Some funding is also available for staff who wish to attend relevant outside courses. Currently, training provision concentrates on delivery and teaching methods or priority issues such as women's education.

Despite the small number of staff spread over wide geographical areas in each unit, take-up of training was reported as good, mirroring the situation in the local authority sector. Again, training was targeted at small groups of eight to twenty with take up usually being at least half the target group. An essential feature of training events was the provision made for child care as a substantial number of part-time workers had young children.

Perceptions of the Quality of Training

A few criticisms aside, respondents were highly satisfied with the training they had received. There were three main criticisms concerning the insufficient number of training opportunities, structure of some events, and locality.

Specific training courses put on by demand were considered to be well run and effective, while annual training days which allowed a lot of free discussion time were criticised for the lack of structure. On the other hand, staff in both case-study areas were consulted as to their needs and were involved in the evaluation and monitoring of training.

Support systems were similar to those in ABE with tutors from the same locality or subject specialism forming small teams under the leadership of a co-ordinator. The overall organisers kept in regular contact with individuals through informal meetings, class visits, staff meetings and training events.

It is worth highlighting four points about WEA and ABE training:

- the overall aims and objectives of the organisation are clear;
- training is typically delivered by practitioners;
- trainers support part-time staff through regular contact;
- part-time staff are involved in the development of training through prior consultation about their needs and evaluation of events.

This brief glance at training provision and take-up in both the local authority and voluntary sectors indicates that a wide range of training is provided in terms of both content and structure. Access of an individual part-time worker to training is dependent on a number of factors including the availability of trainers, the size of the training budget and geography. The next section reports the views of part-time workers and their employers/trainers on the prospect of a modular approach to training.

Perceptions of modular training

The case-study data provides the basis of this section. Our interviewees were asked for comments on a modular approach to training. In particular, we were interested in their views on modules being certificated by SCOTVEC.

Before going any further, we should point out that modular training was a new concept to many of the staff interviewed and misunderstood by several of those who had come across it. This meant that a description of a modular approach had to be supplied. The description included the following elements:

- a package of learning over a period of 20 to 40 hours;
- a package which specified at the start what the student would have learned by the end of the module;
- the prospect of national certification;
- the potential of linking one module to other modules.

It is important to remember that most of our respondents were reacting to the **idea** of modules as outlined above, rather than the **experience** of modules. Very few had taught modules or been a student on a modular programme. They were therefore, largely unaware of the degree of flexibility

in 'fleshing out' modules, adapting modules to local circumstances or flexibility in teaching and learning approaches. The many misconceptions, unfounded assumptions and prejudices uncovered by our research, suggests a need for clear information about modules being targeted to community education if a modular approach to training is to be adopted.

Although the majority of our respondents would welcome the introduction of nationally recognised training modules their support was not unqualified. Part-time staff were generally in favour of modules, but had reservations about delivery and certification by SCOTVEC. The least support, amounting to direct opposition in some cases, was found among employers/trainers. Details of our respondents attitudes to modular training are summarised in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: Attitudes to modular training

	Part-time Staff		Employers/Trainers		
	For	Other	For	Against	Reservations
Local Authority Sector					
Inner City	3				3
Rural Area	5	1 no comment	1		1
Mixed Area	4	2 qualified support	2	1	1 no comment
Voluntary Sector					
Rural Sector	4		1		
Mixed Area	2		1 (qualified)		
Totals	18	3	5	1	5

Those who were in favour of a modular approach gave reasons which could be divided into three main categories, **enhancing and systematising training, opening up employment prospects and increasing the availability of training**. Table 3.7 gives examples of these categories.

Table 3.7: Reasons for supporting modular training

Enhancing and systematising training

- would develop standardised training
- would fill gaps in training
- would provide continuity of training

Opening up employment prospects

- would provide nationally recognised qualifications
- would validate skills
- would provide an avenue to full-time training and qualification
- may 'open up' further employment in education to part-time staff

Increasing the availability of training

- courses would be available regardless of the availability of staff
- would provide a package to 'take off the shelf'
- could be adapted to local needs
- could be delivered in situ
- would provide open access to skills

As this table shows, expectations of the range of benefits modules could provide are rather unrealistic. There also seem to be some misconceptions regarding the content of modules, probably arising from the assumption that modules are like distance learning packages, filled with model materials and a lack of understanding of what 'fleshing out' entails. Whether modules would lead to full-time training or improved employment prospects is open to quesion. Nevertheless, there is obviously a latent demand for formal validation of skills acquired and an opening up of employment prospects in adult education.

Conditions upon which support for modules depended included stipulations that local community education trainers (part-time and full-time) would be involved in their design and delivery, that they would include practical activities and that they would not become prerequisites for employment. Distance learning was unpopular re-emphasising the need for on the job support and contact, made in Chapter 2.

As mentioned above, most doubts about a modular approach came from employers/trainers. Doubts can be categorised under the following three headings **lack of relevance, inappropriateness for community education ethos**, and **loss of contact between full-time and part-time staff**. Table 3.8 gives examples of these categories.

Table 3.8 **Doubts about a modular approach**

Lack of relevance
• lack local relevance
• lack personal relevance
• be regarded as a 'second rate' qualification
• become out of date
• too rigid
Inappropriateness for community education ethos
• create opportunities for failure
• fear of compulsory training
• become a prerequisite for payment of staff
• would lead to loss of part-time staff
• professionalisation of voluntary work
Loss of contact between full-time and part-time staff
• delivered by further education staff
• threat to local training
• delivered in a college rather than on the job

Employers were concerned about costs, both in terms of staff time and budgets. Their greatest worries were about the providers of modular training. While several employers/trainers felt that full-time staff might have to spend more time supervising modular training and questioned the suitability of community education sites becoming centres of accreditation, they were also reluctant to surrender responsibility to colleges of further education which they see as already having encroached on their traditional territory. Only one employer felt that modular training should be undertaken by the colleges.

On the whole, however, the objections listed in Table 3.7 arise from misconceptions about the nature of modules, particularly in terms of adaptability to personal circumstances. While we are aware that there is a debate about the appropriateness of modules as a way of providing training, both the tables indicate there is a need to raise awareness about modules within the local authority and voluntary sectors if it is to be an informed debate.

Summary

This chapter has considered the extent, form and take-up of training of part-time adult education workers in Scotland. We have illustrated the range of courses provided, the good response rate to training opportunities and the different content areas covered. We have drawn attention to factors affecting the availability of training to any individual part-timer by giving examples of staff receiving no training in various parts of the country. We have also highlighted the problems of obtaining

statistically reliable information on training provision and uptake, information which we would consider important for strategic planning. Finally, we have reported the conflicting views about modules, stressing that doubts come mainly from full-time staff and shown that more information is needed by full-time and part-time staff.

4

Summary and conclusion

In this chapter we try to sum up our findings about training needs and provision and to discuss their implications for training policy for part-time staff. In providing a summary we take each of the aspects of the research described in Chapter 1 in turn.

What kind of roles do part-time adult educators play?

Many different roles were identified depending on the particular contexts in which part-time staff operated. School teachers taking adult evening classes in their specialist subject were exceptional in that they identified their role only as teachers and modified their teaching methods only slightly for working with adults. While they were aware that adults did not learn in the same way as children, they perceived these differences in terms of motivation and behaviour and not in learning styles. Outreach workers, ABE and WEA tutors, many of whom were former teachers, challenged this view and identified a wider range of roles that part-timers might have to play. They were more likely to see themselves as facilitators, group workers or resource persons. ABE and WEA workers also emphasised programme development, organisation and management. These terms not only reflect the variety of methods and approaches used by these workers, but also in our view, a greater awareness of the adult learner's needs acquired through their training experience.

What kinds of training are necessary to support staff in these roles?

Although the majority of our respondents came from a teaching background a significant number had had very different employment experience. We were forcefully reminded, however, that it was a mistake to assume that staff with teaching or social work qualifications did not need training. There are likely to be different profiles of training needs for individual workers and we discuss the implications of this for a modular approach to training below. Our research suggests four broad categories of training needs for all part-time adult education workers:

- induction, which we define as an introduction to the setting in which one is operating;
- basic training, which we define as the development of key basic skills necessary to perform the job of part-time adult educator;
- refresher courses for experienced workers;
- specialist courses such as counselling, assertiveness, computers.

How satisfactory is existing training and what are the factors contributing to satisfactory training?

Training was perceived as successful when it:

- included opportunities to meet other part-time staff;
- was relevant (in terms of content) to the situation in which staff were working;
- included practical activities;

- was not too time consuming;
- was delivered by those with recent experience of adult education.

There was a clear need for on-the-job training and regular support from more experienced workers as well as 'training courses'.

Chapter 3 described the range of training courses on offer between April 1987 and March 1988. However, that chapter also drew attention to the influence of such factors as the availability of full-time staff and budgetary constraints in determining whether part-time staff had access to training. Detailed research into the organisation and management of training in Scotland was not possible. It is noteworthy, however, that where area teams have a designated 'lead person' for training, as in Renfrew, training was offered to all categories of staff. Similarly, where specialised groups such as ABE have Training Officers a comprehensive programme of staff development may be implemented on a region wide basis.

How is modular training perceived?

Very few staff had experienced modular training either as trainers or trainees and so were responding to the **idea** of a modular approach. There was considerable support for a modular approach from part-time staff who saw such an approach as:

- enhancing and systematising training;
- opening up employment prospects;
- increasing the availability of training.

Most doubts about a modular approach were voiced by full-time staff, these we have categorised as employer/trainer. Their doubts were in terms of:

- lack of relevance;
- inappropriateness for community education ethos;
- loss of contact between full-time and part-time staff.

There seems a widespread lack of information about modules among community education workers. Modular training is a contentious issue and there will, no doubt, be a continuing debate about it. The research suggests that all involved need better information about modules, particularly on their local relevance and on assessment procedures.

Key points for future training developments

In this final section we identify what seem to us to be the major points that need to be considered when developing training for part-time adult education workers. These are points arising from the research and so they do not address political and financial questions which necessarily underpin any development activity.

- There needs to be a clearer focus on the purposes of the different strands of adult education. Without explicitly defined aims and objectives it is difficult to identify training needs accurately. We are not in a position to advocate the setting of national and regional objectives for adult education given our small sample size. However, our case-study data has demonstrated the value of area teams specifying their objectives and

evaluating whether their training is geared to meeting these. We were struck by the differences between Adult Basic Education and mainstream adult education in this respect. In ABE objectives are clearly set and training targeted, as is the case in voluntary youth organisations discussed in our report on youth work. Specific objectives for adult education in general would provide a framework for training and would contribute towards the public accountability of the system.

- The existence of a training team led by a designated 'lead person' responsible for training or a training officer facilitates the identification of training needs and ensures that the same quality and provision of training is available within the region, division or unit.

- There is a need for regular informal support and evaluation, provided on the job, by more experienced colleagues. Our case-study work and the responses to our national survey strongly suggested that training should be conceived as one-to-one on the job, as well as more formal training courses.

- Training has to be practical and relevant to be perceived as successful. It is important to remember that most part-time workers have other demands on their time and many are volunteers. They generally give a lot of their time outside class contact hours for preparation work or meetings and poorly targeted courses are resented. Training that involved practical tasks and was participative was highly valued. Unstructured or disorganised training events led to disappointment.

- The issue of payment for training must be addressed. If training is viewed as an essential part of staff development strategy and team building, part-time paid staff should qualify for paid training as do their full-time colleagues. Additionally, as many of the staff are working mothers, creches or reimbursement of child-minding costs should be made available.

- Training has to be delivered by people with credibility in the field. Practitioners had the highest credibility as trainers and opportunities to learn from colleagues were highly valued.

- Joint tutoring or working alongside others can help on the job training, the identification of training needs and reduce feelings of isolation

- There is an overall consensus on basic and advanced training needs across the local authority and voluntary sectors. This suggests scope for inter-agency training at both levels.

- There seems to be a lack of readily accessible information about training provision and take-up in the local authority sector. We would have thought such information necessary for strategic planning.

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